

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9519

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TAGS: ECOSOC, ELAB

SUBJECT: 63RD ECOSOC: GENERAL DEBATE ON IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE
REPORT OF THE ILO FOCUSES ON "POLITICIZATION" CRISIS

1. DURING GENERAL DEBATE IN THE PPCC ON THE IN-DEPTH STUDY OF
THE REPORT OF THE ILO MORNING OF JULY 19 SIX OF THE NINE SPEAKERS
ADDRESSED THEMSELVES TO THE "POLITICIZATION" CRISIS. DIRGEN
BLANCHARD RESPONDED TO THE STATEMENTS MADE. FOLLOWING ARE HIGH-
LIGHTS.

2. ARGENTINA SAID THAT "DEPOLITICIZATION" DOESN'T MEAN ILO
SHOULD AVOID POLITICS BUT THAT ALL POLITICAL PROBLEMS THAT RELATE
TO PEACE AND SECURITY SHOULDN'T BE CONSIDERED IN ALL UN BODIES
BUT SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR THE GA. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE ILO
SHOULD NOT BE SACRIFICED FOR ANY REASON.

3. MEXICO DIDN'T AGREE ENTIRELY THAT POLITICIZATION IS CAUSE OF ILO
CRISIS BUT DID BELIEVE THAT ILO SHOULDN'T BE TURNED INTO A
BATTLEFIELD.

4. AMONG WESTERN STATES NETHERLANDS, FRANCE, AND UK AVOIDED
QUESTION OF POLITICIZATION. AUSTRIA DECLARED ILO MUST BE CAREFUL
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NOT TO DEAL WITH QUESTIONS THAT ARE NOT IN ITS COMPETENCE
WHILE ITALY SAID IT AGREED WITH DIRGEN BLANCHARD'S APPEAL IN
PLENARY THAT POLEMICS SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM ILO DISCUSSIONS
WHICH THREATEN THE WORK AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE ORGANIZATION.

5. SYRIA NOTED THE "DAILY CAMPAIGN OF INTIMIDATION" BY ONE
COUNTRY WHICH SAYS IT WILL WITHDRAW FROM THE ILO IF ANOTHER

COUNTRY DOES NOT STOP ITS ACTIONS. POLITICIZATION WAS A JUSTIFICATION FOR WITHDRAWAL AND NOT THE REAL REASON -- WHICH WAS THAT MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORGANIZATION NO LONGER SERVED A COUNTRY'S NATIONAL INTEREST. IT WAS "VERY SAD" THAT THE ILO SHOULD BE MENACED EVERYDAY AND THAT THE DIRGEN WAS SUBJECTED TO THREATS THAT HE WOULD "LOSE 25 PERCENT OF HIS BUDGET" IF CERTAIN ACTIONS WERE NOT TAKEN.

6. USSR AMB NESTERENKO ASKED WHAT IS "POLITICIZATION" AND PROCEEDED TO ANSWER THAT EACH DELEGATION WOULD DEFINE THE TERM DIFFERENTLY. USSR BELIEVED IT TO MEAN THAT ILO HAS COME CLOSER TO THE TASKS THAT ARE MOST URGENT, E.G., THE ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE, DISARMAMENT. THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH SUCH "POLITICIZATION". THE ILO WAS NO LONGER "DOMINATED BY GRUPS" THAT HAD CONTROLLED IT FOR YEARS AND IT COULD NO LONGER HIDE FROM THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE.

7. IN RESPONDING TO STATEMENTS, ILO DIRGEN BLANCHARD DEPLORED THE "VAGUE, PERJORATIVE CONTENT" OF THE TERM "POLITICIZATION". HE REGRETTED THAT PEOPLE ONLY SEE THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES OF THE ILO, BUT DESPITE THESE DIFFICULTIES THE ILO HAS NOT BEEN SLOWED DOWN IN ITS TECHNICAL PROGRAM. THERE SHOULD BE NO LIMIT TO THE POLITICAL DEBATE WITHIN THE ILO PROVIDED THAT IT "FALLS WITHIN THE MANDATE, PRINCIPLES, AND PROCEDURES" OF THE ILO. IN DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN STATEMENT, HE SAID HE HAS NOT SUBMITTED TO ANY OUTSIDE PRESSURES AND THAT ANY PRESSURE ON HIM WAS NORMAL FOR THE POSITION HE HELD. VANDEN HEUVEL
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